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La psychologie sociale de Gabriel Tarde. Par AMÉDÉE MATAGRIN. Paris, Félix Alcan, 1910.—pp. 352.

A disdain of system,—or at least a modest refusal to create even the impression of the monumental,—is no less characteristic of Tarde than of other French thinkers. Of his social philosophy as a whole we have from his own hand merely the sketch in his little book, the *Lois sociales*, an abridgment of *Les lois de l'imitation*, and its chief complements, *La logique sociale* and *L'opposition universelle*. When it is recognized that, even more than these works, it is his many scattered writings in which he applies his theories to economic, political, juristic, and criminological questions that give significance to Tarde's social philosophy, the usefulness of such an résumé as this, especially when the work is so well done, is beyond question. The difficulty of doing justice to one whose chief attraction is to be found in the multitude and suggestiveness of his examples, is fully realized by the author, but he meets the difficulty much more than half-way.

One of the features for which the reader of Tarde will probably be most grateful is the reconstruction of the historical background of his thought, especially his connection with the critical philosophy of Cournot. But M. Matagrin also brings out the real originality of his point of view. It was at a time when the science of sociology was in danger of losing itself in other sciences that Tarde came with his great work of synthesis, with his emphasis upon the one question: What is the specific and elementary social fact? His "social logic," with its four principles of the social cosmology (variation, imitation, opposition, adaptation), implies, one easily perceives, the rejection of previous sociological doctrines. Tarde admits neither the law of unilinear evolution from confused homogeneity to coördinated heterogeneity, nor the organic theory in its materialistic form. In the *Lois de l'imitation* he insists that, while society as a living being organizes itself, organization is but a means; propagation is its essential end. He believes that the pretended Spencerian law, the instability of the homogeneous, explains nothing. The sole way to explain the exuberant diversities at the surface of reality is "to admit at the basis of things a crowd of tumultuous elements, individually characterized." From the point of view of this monadology, he will remind the sciences of the purely symbolic value of the laws they establish.

Though emphasizing the originality of Tarde's psychomorphism, he also points out its dangers, especially the "psychology saturated with metaphysics" that resulted. The essential and durable part of his work is the discovery of a social "inter-psychology"; his principal claim to a place in science is his profound study of social opinion and public life.

According to Tarde, the sole communicable elements (of this inter-psychology) are the two essential forces, variable in their degree but not in their essential nature, desire and belief. The sensation, taken as the basis of modern psychology, is really subjective and relative to the individual. Explanation of fundamental human similarities by the intelligence is insufficient. Intelligence is merely a necessary condition. It is rather suggestion or imitation,

in its normal and objective aspect, that alone makes possible a comprehensive conception of sociology, and one not merely a servant of biology. If Matagrín believes, as he does, that Tarde has justified the conception of a social psychology, relatively independent of both individual psychology and biology, it is not because he accepts either his metaphysics or his characterization of the essential social fact. His criticism of Tarde's philosophy of desire and belief, as well as of his view that these are the subject-matter of statistics, is most searching. As for the theory of imitation, he does not hesitate to speak of it as a "parasitic principle" that spoils the whole of Tarde's sociological work. He points out, rather keenly I think, that association is more fundamental than imitation. If Tarde replies that association is perhaps the more fundamental metaphysical conception, of which imitation is the specific social expression, Matagrín raises the counter-objection that this holds only if it be pretended that a universal sociomorphism is demonstrated analytically. But it fails absolutely if, on the other hand, it be shown that imitation is not primary but secondary and teleological. Most imitations, Matagrín holds, are teleological. There are two fundamental objections to Tarde's conceptions that he has never really met: that man does not invent for the pleasure of inventing, but in response to needs; that he does not imitate for the pleasure of imitating, but adopts merely those forms that seem to him useful and true. Is imitation the sole cause of association or its end? Is it *by* imitating or *in order* to imitate that men associate? The first is not true; the second involves a paradox. Repetition has no interest in itself; it concerns itself with secondary differences rather than with fundamental similarities. The one consideration that Tarde continually neglects is the fact one often notes, that sympathy and prestige are more fragile and variable than interest.

But while having us recognize all this, Matagrín would also insist upon the value of the contributions to social science of a mind in a sense greater than his theories. The presentation as well as evaluation of Tarde's contributions to practical sociology, especially penology, no less than of his suggestive speculations in the spheres of ethical, economic, and religious conceptions, is admirable. It is true, the fact that the phenomena of societies and groups are for Tarde but material for the interpretations of the social psychologist, means that these interpretations will be affected by the "parasitic principle" of imitation. His explanation of the notions of value and sovereignty by his theory of desire and belief, his explanation of the law of supply and demand not by the interest of the individual but by the imitation of desires, carried him too far. His theory of value, while criticising not without reason the too simple and mechanical law of supply and demand, substitutes too absolutely for it a logical and teleological explanation that leaves little reality to political economy as a positive science. His systematization of the material of economics under his captions of repetitions, oppositions, and adaptations, so energetically repulsed by the specialists, must be recognized as having largely suggestive value. All this, however, does not in the least diminish the significance of his penetrative insight into the phenomena of the life of modern

societies, nor the value of an attempt at synthesis, which, if not the most comprehensive, is at least one of the most interesting in the field of social science.

To those who have followed at all closely the criticism of Tarde's works during the last fifteen years, the book will appear to be the mature judgment of one who has known most intimately the drift of sociological opinion in that time. To those who are familiar with Tarde himself, that judgment will appear sound and just which finds in him "a vast and original mind, but one too systematized by the need of certitude," and which sees in his subordination of teleology to logic, and his complete separation of the social phenomena from their biological basis, the chief sources of weakness in his work.

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Le doute. Par PAUL SOLLIER. Paris, Félix Alcan, 1909.—pp. 404.

The doubt of which this book treats is a mental process which is sometimes normal, sometimes pathological. The normal doubter is the person whose doubts are occasional, who has, that is, some reason or objective ground for his feeling of uncertainty. The morbid doubter, on the contrary, makes his occasions, and his uncertainties have a subjective basis. But pathological differs from normal doubt, says the author, only in the exaggeration and persistence of its manifestations.

The characteristics of doubt are as follows. It is primarily an oscillation between two or more representations, beliefs, or courses of action, a hesitation to commit oneself to either or any side. And the oscillation is always unpleasant—often agonizing. These two points Sollier considers the essentials of doubt. This opposition of tendencies is really also a division or conflict within the self. Doubt of the external world engenders doubt of self. The doubter is self-conscious, and this is particularly annoying when he is trying to perform acts which are usually automatic. Acute self-consciousness is inhibitive and the author says that it is rare for the morbid doubter to lose self-consciousness completely. The strong affective tone, and the fact that the oscillations are involuntary and unsought for, distinguish this experience from impersonal or philosophic doubt, which the writer does not include in his field. A tendency to obsessions is general in cases of pathological doubt. It is not essential, since the doubter may sometimes suspend his state of hesitancy and attend to other things, but obsession is a fairly constant manifestation of doubt. If, for example, an habitual doubter is not sure whether he has washed his hands perfectly clean from some contamination, he may wash them again and again indefinitely, or some certain number of times which he has fixed for himself "in order to be sure." This mania for repeating the operation is his obsession and it is the natural result of the doubt, *i. e.*, is his means of assuaging that doubt.

Certain sensory and motor accompaniments of morbid doubt are noted. There are sensations of tingling, pricking, burning, and numbness, and even sometimes a diminution of sensitivity, chiefly in the region of the head.